

draft - DCI's Briefing to
the NSC - 16 Jan. 58

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THE SOVIET CIVIL DEFENSE PROGRAM

1. The Soviet civil defense program is not new; rather it represents a position achieved by the expenditure of considerable sums in construction, equipment and training over a period of years. There appears to have been an increase in the scope and cost of the program through the years but there is no evidence of a sudden acceleration in the intensity of the program since 1950-51, or that it is scheduled for completion coincident with a future target date set for the instigation of hostilities. The construction, equipment and training program has, however, continued to provide growing protection for an ever larger portion of the population.
2. Some aspects of Soviet civil defense are obscured by security precautions. It is admittedly difficult for foreign reporting officers to observe easily civil defense activities since indoctrination and training are accomplished through small groups in such places as factories and club rooms without being highly publicized, and some of the more obvious preparations such as the posting of shelter signs will not, in accordance with stated doctrine, be made until the declaration of an emergency. For example, little detailed information was available on Hungary prior to the uprising of 1956. Once it was possible to get access to a considerable number of people without rigid security control, a vast panorama of civil defense preparation was revealed.

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3. Civil defense in the USSR is the responsibility of the Main Administration of Local Antiair Defense (GUMPVO), an arm of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD). Under GUMPVO is a body of civil defense staff officers who are assigned to posts at all levels of government and in many major economic enterprises where they supervise civil defense preparations.

4. The Soviet program demands specialized training for civil defense personnel and survival training for the urban population. A school for civil defense staff officers is operated in Leningrad. GUMPVO maintains a central scientific laboratory and a medical research installation.

5. The Voluntary Society for Cooperation with the Army, Air Force, and Navy (DOSAAF) is the organization charged with giving civil defense training to the general population. DOSAAF units are formed in factories, institutions, offices, collective and state farms, machine tractor stations, schools, and dwelling units. Its membership is estimated at about thirty million at the present time. Most of its members probably have to take civil defense training courses. Completion of the initial atomic defense training program for the Soviet population was announced in 1957.

6. Although it is doubtful that all citizens have been indoctrinated under the program, training has probably been widespread in DOSAAF, in the Communist party, and in key industries. To supplement the earlier air and chemical defense course, and the atomic defense course, every citizen of the USSR over 16 years of age is now

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to receive 22 hours of instruction in a new course in air defense, including atomic, bacteriological and chemical (ABC) defense. Such training is to be completed in large cities by mid-1956 and in the remaining cities and villages by the end of 1958. Widespread criticism by the DOSAAF press of the implementation of past civil defense training, as well as continuing reports by western observers of general apathy and even aversion to such programs, indicates that the achievement of these goals may be delayed.

7. First-aid training is conducted by the Red Cross and the Red Crescent Societies. Members of these societies would be used extensively as auxiliary personnel for medical organizations which have civil defense roles.

8. It is believed that training of operational units at the city or area level is now in progress. Civil defense paramilitary "battalions" have appeared in three European satellites, and civil defense preparations in these countries follow a common pattern under the leadership of the USSR. At least some of the officers of such units were trained in Leningrad.

9. It has been demonstrated in the case of Hungary that a considerable civil defense program can be obscured by security restrictions and compartmentalizing of information. Evidence similar to that received from the USSR was received on the civil defense effort in Hungary prior to the 1956 uprising. The level of public discussion and overt signs of preparation were not much greater than has been received from the USSR. Since then, many reports from refugees have solidly confirmed a civil defense

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program in that country including compulsory civil defense training, regularly held air raid drills in office and factories, the distribution of some civil defense supplies, and the mandatory inclusion of air-raid shelters in basements of new building construction. Moreover, it was found that many large, heavily constructed shelters were being built in Hungary for government offices, for the personnel of important factories and for emergency communications centers and civil defense headquarters. It was also found that operative civil defense units to be assigned in principal cities were being organized and trained since 1954 into national-guard type units. Sirens were installed and civil defense duty officers were standing watch in city headquarters.

10. Civil defense officials in the USSR have on hand some emergency supplies; the principal satellites have been accumulating such supplies for several years. The exact level of these supplies is unknown, but there is apparently more than is necessary for training.

11. By 1949 the USSR had initiated a program to include reinforced basement shelters in the construction of new public buildings, factories, schools, and apartment dwellings.

12. About 200 reports, including many from returning prisoners of war who worked on such construction, indicate that the inclusion of air raid shelters in new buildings is a standard practice. Soviet literature describes basement shelters as having sufficient strength to withstand the complete collapse of buildings. The shelters,

designed to be gasproof, are fitted with hermetically sealed double doors. They are constructed to utilize filter ventilating systems, but most reports do not indicate actual installation, possibly because such systems were to be installed by Soviet workers or because installation was deferred to a later date. Prior to the installation of such filtration devices these shelters would be of limited value in protecting against fall-out. The construction of such shelters is continuing. The volume of new housing being built has already made apartment shelter available to workers as well as to government and Party functionaries. It is reassuringly stated in official Soviet publications on the subject that basement shelters are satisfactory protection against atomic weapons.

13. Isolated reports have been received that detached shelters, of strength and design comparable to basement air-raid shelters, have been built in the USSR. These have two entrances and are covered with about one meter of earth.

14. The precise extent of the Soviet shelter program is unknown. There is evidence that most state-owned housing of masonry construction built since 1951 has included some provision for a shelter area. In addition there are shelters in factories and public buildings. It is roughly estimated that at least 10 to 15 millions of the urban population would by now be furnished partial protection and the program for furnishing such protection is continuing.

15. In addition, a 1956 Soviet publication, as well as information on shelter-building activities in the European satellites,

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indicates that heavier bunkers and hillside tunnel shelters have been designed. The strength of these structures varies, but specifications have been reported for new bunkers in the satellites able to resist pressure as high as 65 pounds per square inch. Some satellite bunkers have been reported furnished with medical supplies, tools, foods, auxiliary power generators, and communications installations. The installations are generally constructed at factories and enterprises of military importance and in proximity to party and government offices or to transport and communications centers. A few reports of a similar nature indicate that preparations of this type ~~are~~ have been carried out in the USSR although the number of such efforts is limited.

16. In addition, some protected control centers have been prepared outside urban areas. For example, there are several confirmed locations of underground facilities near Sofia which are reportedly designated for the use of the Bulgarian government in an emergency. Satellite civil defense preparations appear generally to follow the Soviet model. It is believed that the Kremlin has already constructed or is now providing similar installations in the USSR to protect essential elements of the party and government, the transportation and communications network, and workers in vital industries. The same general type of protection is probably being afforded civil defense headquarters, important telecommunications terminal facilities, and some broadcasting installations.

17. Information received during 1957 confirms the emphasis on civil defense preparations as well as the readjustments toward the

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nuclear concept of air defense. Hungarian refugees have reported extensively on heavy bunker and gallery-type shelters constructed in [redacted] that country between 1952 and 1956. [redacted] reported that new extensions of the Moscow subway continue to be built at a great depth, for no apparent reason other than possible use for civil defense. The latest extension crossing the Moscow river to the University, however, is being built over, rather than under that body of water. New manuals, film, and a television broadcast on nuclear civil defense subjects appeared in the USSR during 1957.

18. Although occasionally mentioned by satellite sources, the concept of evacuation of cities for nuclear defense has not been mentioned in Soviet publications. The population is advised to seek locally available shelter in the event of air attacks. Soviet civil defense publications advise construction of field-type shelters upon declaration of a "threatening situation" in the event formal shelter is not available.

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